

News of the Week.

Mutsuhita, Emperor of Japan, is seriously ill, and not expected to live.

Andrew Lang, celebrated poet and critic, died at Banchory, Scotland, July 21st. His writings include histories, essays, ballads, fairy-tales, etc.

Robert Weideman Barret Browning, only son of Elizabeth Barret and Robert Browning, died at Asolo, Italy, on July 12th, at the age of sixty-four.

Fire in Vancouver, B. C., on Sunday, July 21st, destroyed property to the extent of one and a half million dollars.

Over four hundred thousand flies were killed, as a result of a competition held by the Ottawa branch of the National Council of Women, in which prizes amounting to \$25.00 were offered to those bringing in the largest number of dead flies. In order to encourage the war of extermination, the London branch of the National Council have duplicated this offer, and hope for even greater results. If other communities were to join hands in this work of destruction, the extermination of this pest would soon be brought about.

Flying Reptiles of Old.

We are apt to think of reptiles as creeping and crawling things, forgetting that there was a time when flying reptiles were more common than birds. These reptiles, the pterodactyls, or flying dragons, not only flew, but some of them reached a size much greater than any bird, for the largest birds do not fly. The South American condor sometimes measures as much as ten and one-half feet from tip to tip of outstretched wings, and it is quite possible that the finest examples of the albatross may measure a little more. But the great pterodactyls which flew about the sea that in days of old reached from the Gulf of Mexico to the Rocky Mountains, measured as much as twenty feet, the width of an average city lot, across their wings.

Most of us have seen an eagle flying, and we can appreciate the size of this ancient dragon by remembering that it was nearly three times the size of an eagle. It was not, however, three times as heavy, for the body of this strange reptile was so small, and its skeleton so wonderfully light, that the entire animal is thought to have weighed not more than 25 pounds, or only about as much as a large condor. One of the largest bones of the wing, two feet long, and two inches through, was, as Professor Willison tells us, no thicker than a sheet of blotting paper, and the great head, with a beak over three feet long, was equally light. This great toothless beak is believed to have been used for snapping up fishes; and we can imagine this huge creature sailing swiftly over the sea, now and then swooping down to pick up a fish as deftly, for all its size, as a real swallow.

But what did Ornithostoma—this is the animal's name—do with his wings and beak when he made an occasional visit to the land? One would think they must have been very much in his way, and that the animal was as awkward on the shore as he was graceful in the air. And how did he start to fly? With such enormous wings, we think Ornithostoma must have dwelt on cliffs about the sea, and launched off them as gannets do from Bird Rock. This great flying reptile lived some six million years ago; the sea over which it flew long ago disappeared, and the mud into which its bones sank became chalk, and from the formation of these great chalk beds the time at which Ornithostoma existed is called the Cretaceous period.

The Old Man's Dream.

O for one hour of youthful joy!
Give back my twentieth spring!
I'd rather laugh a bright-haired boy,
Than reign a gray-haired king!

Off with the wrinkled spoils of age!
Away with learning's crown!
Tear out life's wisdom-written page,
And dash its trophies down!

One moment let my life-blood stream
From boyhood's fount of flame!
Give me one giddy, reeling dream
Of life all love and fame!

My Listening angel heard the prayer,
And calmly smiled and said,
"If I but touch they silvered hair,
Thy hasty wish hath sped."

"But there is nothing in my track
To bid thee fondly stay,
While the swift seasons hurry back
To find the wished-for day?"

Ah, truest soul of womankind!
Without thee, what were life?
One bliss I cannot leave behind;
I'll take—my—precious—wife!

The angel took a sapphire pen
And wrote in rainbow dew,
"The man would be a boy again,
And be a husband, too."

"And is there nothing yet unsaid,
Before the change appears?
Remember, all their gifts have fled
With those dissolving years!"

Why, yes, for memory would recall
My fond paternal joys;
I could not bear to leave them all;
I'll take—my—girls—and—boys!

The smiling angel dropped his pen,
"Why, this will never do;
The man would be a boy again,
And be a father, too!"

And so I laughed—my laughter woke
The household with its noise—
And wrote my dream when morning broke,
To please the gray-haired boys.
—O. W. Holmes.

Bread.

I had a dreadful dream—I sowed the
wind,
And lo! the whirlwind rose for me to
reap.
In bloody sweat I reaped and bound
some sheaves,
Then cried to God, Who watched within
His place,
"When shall Thy 'Well done' let my
travail cease?"

But God made answer, "Take thou,
now, of grain,
Thresh, grind, and make thee bread for
other souls.
This is My Law—what'er the Harvest
be,
Abundant, wholesome, sweetened by My
sun,
Or scanty, mildewed, evil sown with
tares,
Of that the after seasons shall be fed,
For health and growth, or underfed and
sick,
Withheld from joy and weakened from the
race."

And then, upon the thought of ages
born,
Foredoomed to famine or to tainted
bread,

Because that I had sown amiss, I woke.
—Jessie Annie Anderson, in "Breaths
from the Four Winds"

Thackeray, whose writings afterwards contained so many affectionate reminiscences of old Charterhouse and the life there, did not find it all smooth sailing in the great school. Although in later years his love for Charterhouse found vent in many little ways, he was not always content there as a scholar. In fact, he wrote his mother, saying, "There are but 370 in the school, and I wish there were only 369." When a monitor he informed her that he was "terribly industrious," which was evidently not his master's opinion, since the worthy pedagogue commenced each day with the remark, "Thackeray, Thackeray, you are an idle, profligate rascal."—T.P.'s Weekly.

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Everybody Likes Her.

There is a type of girl that everybody likes. Nobody can tell exactly why, but after you have met her you turn away to some other woman and say: "Don't you like Miss Grosvenor?" Now the reason you like her is a subtle one; without knowing all about her you feel just the sort of girl she is.

She is the girl who appreciates the fact that she cannot always have the first choice of everything in the world.

She is the girl who is not aggressive and does not find joy in inciting aggressive people.

She is the girl who has tact enough not to say the very thing that will cause the skeleton in her friend's closet to rattle his bones.

She is the girl who, whether it is warm or cold, clear or stormy, finds no fault with the weather.

She is the girl who, when you invite

her to any place, compliments you by looking her best.

She is the girl who makes this world a pleasant place because she is so pleasant herself.

And, by-and-by, when you come to think of it, isn't she the girl who makes you feel she likes you, and therefore you like her?—Sel.

A Little Bluecap.

A little blue cap, on the parlor floor,
Is a little blue cap and nothing more,
You say, as people have said before
Since ever the world began.

But, oh, the things that a mother dreams
She sees in its ragged edge and seams—
Boyhood and youth, aye, in it gleams
A hint of the coming man.

She sees his school, and his books, and
slate,

Desk and teacher and play-time mate,
And year on year, 'till a graduate
He faces the world anew.

She sees him braving the brunt of life,
She sees him winning in every strife,
And pictures his sweetheart, his bride,
his wife,

With a vision clear and true.

A little blue cap, on the parlor floor,
Is a little blue cap, and something more,
'Tis a part of her boy, because he wore
It yesternight at his play.

And she strokes its faded and wrinkled
side

With a mother's touch and a mother's
pride

As she hangs it up on the hall-tree wide,
And smilingly goes her way.

—Lalia Mitchell.